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Main Trends in Soviet Military Policy

Submitted by the
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE
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The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Defense, and NSA.

Concurring:

Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State

Director, Defense Intelligence Agency

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The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USIB and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

MAIN TRENDS IN SOVIET MILITARY POLICY

THE PROBLEM

To review significant developments in Soviet military thinking, policy, and programs, and to estimate main trends in Soviet military policies over the next six years.

SCOPE

This estimate focuses upon broad trends in Soviet military policy and doctrine. It does not attempt to recapitulate existing NIEs on Soviet strategic attack, air defense, and general purpose forces. Our most recent detailed estimates on the size, composition, and capabilities of these principal components of the Soviet military forces are as follows:

NIE 11–8–63: Soviet Capabilities for Strategic Attack, 18 October 1963, TOP SECRET (Limited Distribution)

NIE 11–3–62: Soviet Bloc Air and Missile Defense Capabilities Through Mid-1967, 31 October 1962, and Memorandum to Holders of NIE 11–3–62, 20 November 1963, both TOP SECRET

NIE 11–14–63: Capabilities of the Soviet General Purpose Forces, 1963–1969, 8 January 1964, SECRET

CONCLUSIONS

A. The Soviets see the present situation as one in which both sides are deterred from deliberately initiating general war or from knowingly initiating courses of action which would involve grave risk of such a war. They undoubtedly recognize the superiority of the US in strategic power, but they are confident that they possess a credible deterrent based on both their massive capabilities against Eurasia and their growing intercontinental striking forces. Thus, the Soviet leaders do not regard the deliberate

initiation of general war as a feasible course of action either for themselves or for the West. Moreover, despite increased Soviet attention to the possibility of limited wars with the West, we believe that they will remain very reluctant to commit their own forces to such wars. (*Paras. 10–12, 19*)

B. In recent years, there has been a controversy in the USSR over the size and kinds of forces required to safeguard the security of the nation and to support its foreign policies. Khrushchev, who is heavily concerned with the political uses of military power, has emphasized the deterrent role of nuclear weapons, has placed primary reliance on nuclear missile forces, and has sought to cut back other forces in order to hold military spending in check. Khrushchev has been opposed by most of the senior military leaders, who have been more concerned to have forces adequate to fight a war should deterrence fail, including large ground forces for use in all stages of a general war. (*Paras. 1–9*)

C. The resulting policy has been to build up strategic offensive and defensive capabilities while maintaining and improving large general purpose forces. Costly new requirements for advanced weapons have been superimposed upon the demands of a large existing military establishment, and spending on defense and space activities has increased by an estimated 40 percent between 1958 and 1963. The political leadership has become increasingly concerned about growing economic problems caused in considerable measure by the rise in defense expenditures and by the growing military demand for scarce material and human resources of high quality. Economic problems have now become acute, and the Soviets have embarked on large new investment programs, scheduled to run through the rest of the decade. The needs of these programs are certain to clash with those of other claimants, including defense. (*Paras. 13–16*)

D. We believe that the Soviets will strive to hold down defense and space expenditures. We think it very unlikely that the Soviets would halt or sharply cut back programs to produce and deploy strategic weapons to which substantial resources are presently committed, although stretch-out could occur for either economic or technical reasons. The Soviets will continue to make military research and development a matter of high urgency, but we believe that they will use more selectivity in in-

troducing expensive follow-on weapon systems, and that they will decide to postpone or stretch out some military or space programs which are now in planning or R and D phases. Despite Soviet efforts to economize, we do not foresee a substantial decline in defense expenditures, and they may continue to rise. But the rapid growth rate of recent years will probably not be maintained. (*Paras. 25–31*)

E. We do not believe that the Soviets expect to achieve a military posture which would make rational the deliberate initiation of general war. We believe that their objective will be to strengthen the credibility of the Soviet deterrent through a continued buildup and improvement of strategic forces, primarily ICBMs. Our evidence does not indicate that the Soviets are attempting to outstrip or even to match the US in numbers of intercontinental delivery vehicles, but their development of high yield nuclear weapons and compatible delivery vehicles strongly suggests that they may be seeking to improve their position relative to the West by increasing the destructive power of their numerically inferior strategic attack forces. We believe that by the end of the decade they will have several hundred ICBM launchers, a sizable force of missile submarines, and a significant, though reduced, force of bombers. If our estimates are correct, the Soviets will not be able to pursue a strategy of destroying US nuclear striking forces prior to launch, but they will have a force capable of attacking major US cities and soft military targets as well as a capability for retaliation even after an initial US attack. (*Paras. 20–21, 35*)

F. In addition, the Soviets might hope through development and deployment of an antimissile system to offset US strategic superiority to some extent. The Soviets have been making a very large R and D effort in the antimissile field, but we do not believe that they have yet succeeded in developing a system for defense against strategic missiles which is effective and reliable enough to justify the vast expenditure of resources required for widespread ABM deployment. It is possible, though by no means certain, that the Soviets will achieve such a system within the period of this estimate. When and if they do so, they would almost certainly wish to defend key urban-industrial areas, and

they may seek to defend some portion of their ICBM force in order to strengthen their deterrent. We believe that the Soviets intend to develop a capability to counter US military satellites; they could develop a limited antisatellite capability in a few months by modifying existing equipment, but we have no evidence of such a development. (*Paras. 30, 38, 49*)

G. We believe that some manpower reductions will be made, primarily at the expense of theater forces; but these forces will probably remain sizable through the remainder of the decade, and their modernization will continue. It is possible that over the next few years, the Soviets will seek to improve their presently very limited capabilities for distant, limited military operations. The USSR will continue to improve its ASW and anticarrier capabilities, primarily through the application of improved submarine weapon systems and long-range aircraft to these missions. We believe, however, that Soviet capabilities to conduct surface naval and ASW operations in open oceans will remain severely limited. (*Paras. 39–43*)

H. We have considered the possibility that, contrary to present indications, the Soviet leaders will decide on either a major increase or decrease in their military effort during the next five years or so. A major increase seems very unlikely in view of the Soviet economic situation, the unlikelihood that such an increase would add measurably to Soviet military security or political opportunities, and the probability that the US would detect and match or even overmatch the Soviet effort. If, however, Soviet research and development should produce a technological advance promising a significant improvement in their relative strategic capabilities, the Soviet leaders would seek to exploit it and undoubtedly would consider an increase in military expenditures. A substantial reduction in the Soviet military effort also seems very unlikely, in view of the Soviet interests and attitudes that operate against large-scale unilateral military cuts and the inhibitions on Soviet accession to arms reduction agreements with adequate provisions for verification. Nevertheless, we think that the Soviets will probably continue to seek ways to curtail the arms race in a moderate degree by "mutual example," i.e., unilateral, uninspected moves by both sides. (*Paras. 50–52*)

DISCUSSION

I. RECENT PROBLEMS IN SOVIET MILITARY POLICY

1. A number of factors have long affected the character of Soviet military policy. The Communist world outlook and its view of the role of military power have made the building of powerful armed forces a primary objective of the Soviet regime. Geography and the traditions bound up with historical experience have inclined the Soviets toward a military preoccupation with Western Europe and a stress on large-scale ground combat. The capabilities and structure of opposing forces, particularly those of the US, have influenced both the size and shape of Soviet forces, and in recent years have enlarged and complicated Soviet military requirements. Perhaps most important, the technological and economic base of the USSR has offered prospects for more effective weapons, but has also imposed limits beyond which military forces could not be built without great sacrifice in other national programs.

2. We have clear evidence of a continuing controversy about military policy in the USSR over the past several years. The central issue in this controversy has been determination of the force structure required to safeguard the security of the nation and to support its foreign policies. The most important viewpoints have been those represented by Khrushchev, on the one hand, and most of the senior military leaders, on the other.

3. Three major differences have distinguished Khrushchev's approach to defense policy from that of these military leaders. First, Khrushchev has emphasized the deterrent role of nuclear and missile weapons and he has concluded that the growth of these weapons makes general war inadmissible in the present era, while the military are more concerned to have forces adequate to fight a war should it occur. Second, Khrushchev has asserted that if a general war did occur, it would almost certainly be short, with conventional forces playing a quite secondary role. Finally, Khruchshev is far more concerned than the marshals to keep military expenditures in check in order to meet pressing needs in the civilian economy.

4. All these considerations have been involved in Khrushchev's recurring efforts at reorganization and reductions in the Soviet armed forces, along lines which he first publicly advocated in January 1960. Broadly speaking, Khruchshev has favored a force structure which placed main reliance on nuclear and missile forces, and which permitted substantial reductions in the strength of other forces and an accelerated retirement of older weapons. He has argued that such a force structure was best suited both to deter a war and to fight one if necessary; more-

over, it would release badly needed resources to the civilian economy. Khrushchev's concept of force structure and its strategic justification have been opposed by most of the military leadership. From Khrushchev himself, we know that the force reductions initiated in 1960 were accepted only reluctantly by the military, and our evidence indicates that the reductions had stalled even before they were publicly suspended in 1961, ostensibly because of the Berlin crisis.

Problems of Strategy and Doctrine

5. The controversy over force structure both reflected and stimulated a debate over military doctrine and strategy for general war. Khrushchev has been supported by a minority among military writers, who have adopted his "modernist" view, stressing the primacy of nuclear and missile weapons. These writers have contended that a general nuclear war is likely to be short, with the outcome determined by events in the initial phase. The "traditionalist" and majority view among the military has been that despite the advent of new weapons, general war is likely to be protracted, that ground combat on a mass scale will continue to be of major importance, and that victory will require the combined action of all arms, including a multi-million man army. Out of the debate, a compromise has emerged which embraces the views of both of these schools.

6. On the question of how a general war might begin, most Soviet military writings assume deliberate, surprise attack by the US, although some consider escalation from limited war and a few allow for the possibility that general war would begin accidentally. The criticality of the initial period of a nuclear war and the importance of surprise have led some military writers to advocate a form of pre-emptive action by the USSR: i.e., a "spoiling" or "blunting" action launched coincident with or slightly before an enemy attack. However, the doctrinal discussions of which we are aware do not consider a Soviet first strike. In the standard scenario, the USSR survives a nuclear attack, regains the initiative, and goes on to prosecute the war.

7. Current Soviet doctrine holds that a general war will inevitably involve the large-scale use of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, beginning with a strategic exchange which may decide the course and outcome of the war in its initial phase, a relatively brief but not clearly defined period of time. To the Soviets, the importance of this phase implies the necessity to use all available forces at the outset of a general war; the doctrinal writings available to us have noted and rejected such US concepts as controlled response and damage limiting strategies. Moreover, no restraint is evident in targeting concepts for the initial phase of a general war; while enemy nuclear striking forces are evidently to be the primary targets of Soviet nuclear strikes,

powerful nuclear blows are also to be directed against communication and control centers, industrial and population centers, and groupings of enemy armed forces.

8. Despite the primary role attributed to nuclear and missile forces, current Soviet doctrine envisions the commitment of large theater forces virtually at the outset of a general war. It is argued that, even if the war is relatively short, large forces of all types would be required to defeat comparable enemy forces, to overrun base areas, and to occupy territory in Eurasia. Moreover, it is also held that the conflict may be protracted rather than brief and that, in this case, extensive theater campaigns would be required. Thus, current Soviet doctrine supports a military policy emphasizing strategic attack and defense capabilities, but supports as well the maintenance of large general purpose forces for use in all phases of general war.

9. We believe that debate continues, not only over subsidiary propositions, but over central tenets of doctrine as well. Certain key issues, such as the decisiveness of the initial phase, evidently remain unresolved. Moreover, certain vital questions seem to have been ignored. For example, while purporting to deal with a global war in which all types of weapons are employed, the current military writings to which we have access concern themselves almost exclusively with theater forces in Europe. Adequate consideration is not given to the effects of a strategic nuclear exchange on subsequent operations. Virtually no attention is given to the way in which a general war might be brought to a successful conclusion; it seems to be assumed either that US society would collapse as the result of the initial nuclear attack, or that in a long war the Soviet system would prove the more durable.

10. The doctrinal debate, as far as we know, has not dealt with limited war. It is possible that discussion has been limited by official attitudes. Public Soviet statements have usually insisted that a limited war which involved the major nuclear powers would inevitably escalate into general war. Official pronouncements to this effect have almost certainly been designed in large part to deter the West from the local use of force, but they have probably also reflected Soviet fears of becoming involved in limited war. The Soviets now appear to be modifying their position to allow for the possibility that even a limited war involving the major nuclear powers would not necessarily escalate to general war. They may now be persuaded that in the present strategic situation, the initial military reactions to a local crisis would be limited, and that it is therefore not in the Soviet national interest to be doctrinally committed to inevitable escalation.

11. These developments do not mean that the Soviets have reached the conclusion that they now have greater freedom to initiate limited military action in areas where Western forces are likely to become in-

volved. In view of the increasingly grave consequences of escalation, we believe that over the next few years the Soviets will remain very reluctant to commit their own forces to limited warfare against Western forces. Should they nevertheless become directly involved in a limited war with US or allied forces, they would almost certainly seek to prevent escalation both by restraint in the employment of their own forces, and by political means. Despite recent Soviet references to the possibility of limited war involving tactical nuclear weapons, we consider it highly unlikely that the USSR would introduce such weapons into a limited conflict.

12. On the other hand, the Soviets have repeatedly expressed approval of another type of limited military conflict, which they term a "war of national liberation," in which pro-Soviet or anti-Western forces seek to overthrow colonial or pro-Western regimes. The USSR has rendered active assistance in some cases and little or none in others, depending upon broad political considerations and such practical factors as accessibility and the risk of defeat. For the most part, the Soviets have provided little in the way of significant military aid to supplement their moral support. But, sometimes, as in the case of Indonesia and the UAR, the Soviets have provided advanced military equipment and personnel to existing governments in the belief that Soviet political influence can be increased or "national liberation" struggles against Western positions developed. As new and favorable opportunities arise, the USSR will continue to offer various kinds of assistance, including both clandestine support for "anticolonial" dissident movements and overt military assistance to friendly non-Bloc regimes. It may do this more frequently and aggressively in the future; we believe it unlikely, however, that the Soviets will openly commit their own forces to conflicts in which they risk a direct confrontation with US forces.

Problems of Resource Allocation

13. In general, Soviet military policy in recent years has been to build up strategic offensive and defensive capabilities, while maintaining and improving large general purpose forces. The effect has been to superimpose costly new requirements for advanced weapons upon the demands of a large existing military establishment. Our evidence indicates that Soviet defense expenditures, following a decline in 1956–1957, increased in each of the last six years. We estimate that Soviet defense expenditures[1] in 1963 were about 19.5 billion rubles, or about 40 percent higher than in 1958. If incurred in the US, these costs would have been some $47 billion, or 85 percent of comparable US expenditures. As indicated in the following table, the main impetus

[1] Our estimates of Soviet defense expenditures include costs of nuclear weapons, space, and military R and D, much of which is covered in Soviet budget accounts other than "defense."

for this growth has been provided by the continuing buildup in forces for strategic attack and defense and by extensive research and development.

TABLE

ESTIMATED DISTRIBUTION OF SOVIET DEFENSE EXPENDITURES, 1958–1963 [a]

	1958		1963	
	Billion 1955 Rubles	Percent	Billion 1955 Rubles	Percent
Strategic Attack Forces	1.3	9	3.6	19
Air Defense Forces	1.7	12	3.0	15
Ground Forces	4.7	34	4.1	21
Naval Forces	1.7	12	1.8	9
General Command and Support[b]	2.7	19	2.8	14
Research and Development[c]	1.9	14	4.2	22
	14.0	100	19.5	100

[a] Most of the figures in this table are derived from detailed calculations of the estimated magnitude and costs of individual programs to deploy and operate elements of the Soviet military establishment. These calculations produce numbers which suggest a high degree of accuracy. In fact, however, these numbers are subject to considerable uncertainty and should not be considered as precise measures.

[b] Includes estimated expenditures for reserve training, militarized security forces, and paramilitary training, in addition to command and support for the active military establishment.

[c] Includes estimated R and D expenditures for military equipment, nuclear energy, and all space programs. These figures are derived from analysis of published Soviet financial data, and do not represent detailed calculations of R and D activities.

14. Estimated Soviet defense expenditures in recent years have taken on the order of one-tenth of a growing GNP or roughly the same share as in the US. However, they have had a much greater impact on the economy than this comparison implies. For one thing, we estimate that Soviet GNP is roughly half the size of US GNP. Moreover, the newer, more complex weapons systems, which account for most of the increase in military expenditures since 1958, require high quality, scarce material and human resources. We estimate that procurement expenditures for missiles, nuclear warheads, and ground electronics during 1963 were as large as the total of all military procurement in 1958. The burden of defense programs on certain key sectors of the economy is also greater in the USSR than in the US. For example, defense consumed about 35 percent of Soviet durable goods production in 1963 as compared to 25 percent in the US.

15. Soviet military programs of the past several years have also levied new requirements for military manpower upon the economy. Since the low point which resulted from the 1960 force reductions, there has been

a slight increase in the total size of the military establishment, which now stands at an estimated 3.25 to 3.45 million men. More important, in recent years there has been an increased demand for skilled personnel, primarily because of the growth of missile-equipped elements of Soviet strategic forces. Since January 1960, the estimated number of men assigned to strategic defense has increased by one-third, and the manpower in strategic attack forces has at least doubled. The lengthy training needed to supply such personnel requires a substantial training pipeline for these forces. Further, these forces must be maintained in a high degree of readiness and at full strength at all times. The resulting personnel requirements are difficult to meet, and are likely to remain so.

16. The USSR is now in a period of increasingly severe competition for resources among the various sectors of its economy. Increased defense expenditures have greatly contributed to the squeeze on resources, and have also restricted the kinds of expenditures which might have accelerated economic growth. As the economic situation has worsened since 1958, the Soviet leaders have attempted to restore the growth rate to its previous high levels by a number of moves which were, for the most part, short-range expedients and largely unsuccessful. The situation has now reached an acute stage, as unusually severe agricultural difficulties have exacerbated the cumulative effects of declining rates of growth in investment and industrial production.

The Balance of Power

17. The course on which Soviet foreign policy launched in 1957–1958 was built on the expectation that the USSR, for the first time in the postwar struggle, was about to acquire a major advantage in strategic weapons. Khrushchev was evidently persuaded by this prospect to believe that the West could be forced into concessions. The intervening five years have demonstrated, however, not only that the US was capable of resisting this challenge, but also that it could outpace the USSR in the field of strategic weapons, while at the same time strengthening its general purpose forces. By 1962, US military and intelligence programs led to a situation in which both sides, and indeed much of world opinion, understood that the strategic advantage did not lie with the USSR, even though the ability of the USSR to damage the US was increasing. It was against this background that the Soviets undertook the deployment of strategic missiles to Cuba. Through this venture, they sought to achieve a quick and relatively inexpensive advance in both the image and substance of Soviet power. Instead, both the deployment and its reversal constituted a tacit public admission that the USSR was in a position of strategic inferiority.

18. In the aftermath of the Cuban crisis, the Soviet leaders were still confronted by the very problems which their Cuban missile venture had been intended to solve. The overall balance of power between East and

West remained unfavorable. The economic strain of the arms competition loomed as costly as ever. There is evidence of considerable hesitation and re-evaluation in Soviet policy since the failure of the Cuban missile venture, although since about mid-1963, a number of developments have occurred which suggest the general direction Khrushchev proposes to follow. In the economic sphere, short-term plans for 1964–1965 have been revised in order to shift resources, notably to the chemical industry. Consistent with this has been a change in foreign policy tactics, beginning with the test ban, in an effort to relax East-West tensions. The attempt to create a more favorable international climate, in turn, has allowed Khrushchev to secure reductions in the overt defense budget as well as to propose some reductions in military manpower. The sum total of these various steps in related fields suggests that Khrushchev has settled on a general line of policy to contain the arms race, if only in a limited way, and to reduce some of its burden on the Soviet economy.

19. In strategic terms, this line of policy suggests a recognition of the necessity to accept the general balance of power which emerged in the Cuban crisis. Presently, and for some time to come, the Soviet strategic forces will be numerically inferior to those of the US and more vulnerable to attack. The Soviet leaders must recognize, therefore, that the US would enjoy a considerable advantage should it strike first, and that the relative invulnerability, the fast reaction time, and the mobility of US strategic power make a Soviet first strike completely irrational. Nevertheless, in assessing the military balance, the Soviets are confident that they possess a credible deterrent based on both their massive capabilities to devastate Eurasia and their growing intercontinental striking power. Thus, the Soviets see the present situation as one in which both sides are deterred from deliberately initiating general war or from knowingly initiating courses of action which would involve grave risk of such a war.

II. FACTORS AFFECTING FUTURE SOVIET MILITARY POLICY

20. Soviet decisions as to force structure and military programs over the next several years are likely to be made in the context of a situation in which, although the US enjoys a clear strategic advantage, a condition of rough mutual deterrence exists. The Soviets will seek to improve their strategic capabilities *vis-a-vis* the US, however, policy decisions will be influenced by the continuing strain on economic resources, and the pressure arising from competition with the US in scientific and technological developments with military applications. Such decisions will be greatly influenced also by the Soviet estimate of the political situation, the opportunities which it affords, and the contribution which military power can make to the realization of these opportunities.

21. We believe that in these circumstances the primary concern of Soviet policy will be to continue to strengthen their deterrent against US attack primarily through a gradual buildup of ICBMs, hardening of sites, and increased mobility through missile submarines. At one time the Soviets may have considered an attempt to achieve capabilities sufficient to neutralize US strategic forces in a first strike, and they almost certainly have also considered the lesser goal of achieving rough parity with the US in intercontinental weapon systems. In the aftermath of Cuba they may have considered a substantial increase in their military effort. Our evidence does not indicate, however, that the Soviets are presently attempting to match the US in numbers of intercontinental delivery vehicles. Recognition that the US would detect and match or overmatch such an effort, together with economic constraints, appears to have ruled out this option. On the other hand, available evidence on the development of large nuclear warheads and compatible delivery vehicles strongly suggests that the Soviets may be seeking to improve their position relative to the West by increasing the destructive power of their numerically inferior intercontinental strategic attack forces.

22. Continuation of present lines of policy will ensure the Soviets of a growing credibility for their deterrent. However, the dynamism of Soviet policy depends to a great extent on the proposition that the balance of forces in the world is shifting in favor of the Communist world. The Sino-Soviet rupture has already badly damaged this thesis, as has the inability of the Soviets to match the West in military power. It is conceivable that at some point a Soviet leadership would come to believe that they had to forego their expansionist aims, unless they could greatly improve their relative military strength, or at least refurbish the world's image of this strength. They might even be willing to make new economic sacrifices or assume some risks in order to accomplish this. What precise programs they might undertake in pursuit of such an aim we cannot now say, but we cannot rule out that changes in the scale or character of Soviet programs would come about in this way.

23. Internal political considerations resulting from changes in the leadership could have important consequences for military policy. It is likely that Khrushchev will have passed from the scene by the end of the decade, and the ages of the marshals suggest that there will be a wholesale replacement of the top military leadership in this period. What the attitude and policies of a new set of leaders will be cannot be estimated with any certainty. If, as we believe likely, economic and military questions are still paramount issues when Khrushchev departs, the professional advice of the military is likely to grow in importance. The chances for important changes in military policy may improve if a protracted succession struggle develops, but we believe it unlikely that radical departures would occur unless at the same time there were significant changes in the economic or strategic situations confronting the USSR.

24. Any of a host of other changes and opportunities could also affect Soviet military policy and force structures. For example, increasing Chinese hostility toward the USSR could retard reductions in conventional forces by strengthening the arguments of the traditionalists and by posing the need for augmented garrisons near the Chinese borders. In addition, Communist China's unremitting challenge to the Soviets for leadership of the world Communist movement may increase Soviet readiness to support "wars of national liberation." Situations may arise which would offer the Soviets an opportunity for extending their military capabilities through foreign bases or logistic facilities. A further strengthening of NATO would probably also increase Soviet caution with respect to reductions, as might the further loosening of the USSR's hold on its European Satellites. Soviet military requirements could also be affected by shifts in the political and military alignment of Western nations, or by new crises or a heightening of international tensions. While developments such as these are unlikely to bring about drastic changes in Soviet military policy, they would probably affect the pace of evolution in policy and force structure.

Economic Constraints

25. We believe that over the next several years the Soviets will strive to hold down defense and space expenditures so as to release scarce resources to other sectors of the economy. Despite Soviet efforts to economize, we do not foresee a substantial decline in Soviet military expenditures, and they may continue to rise. But the rapid growth rates of recent years probably will not be maintained.

26. The announced four percent reduction in the overt defense budget for 1964 does not necessarily mean that Soviet defense spending will in fact be smaller than before. In the past, planned and actual Soviet military expenditures have differed. Moreover, the published defense budget has covered only about two-thirds of estimated Soviet defense expenditures in recent years. The announced reduction in the defense budget may reflect to some extent anticipated savings from reductions in military manpower, although we have no evidence that force reductions are currently underway. In the longer term, some reductions in military manpower will almost certainly be made. But, while reductions in manpower alone could effect some savings, even drastic cuts would not solve the basic Soviet economic problem: the scarcity of high quality resources.

27. The Soviets could make scarce resources available to the economy in the short term by sharply cutting back or abruptly halting current programs for the production and deployment of major weapons systems to which substantial resources are presently committed. Such extreme measures would be highly wasteful of resources, however, and they would almost certainly encounter strong resistance from the mili-

tary. Considering the reliance which Khrushchev apparently places on the deterrent effect of strategic weapons, we think it unlikely that he would propose drastic interruptions in current deployment programs, but stretch-out could occur for either technical or economic reasons.

28. It seems to us more likely that the Soviet leadership sees the present as an advantageous time to plan for longer term savings in scarce resources by canceling, curtailing, deferring, or stretching out the production and deployment of some of the follow-on weapon systems which are now under development. Our evidence indicates that certain very large programs are approaching completion. The deployment of MRBMs and IRBMs appear to be virtually complete; while we estimate continued improvement of these systems, it seems unlikely that they need to be completely replaced by follow-on systems in the next five years or so. The deployment of SA–2 defenses will probably be substantially completed in the next year or two, and it appears unlikely that deployment of the low altitude SA–3 will reach the scale of the SA–2 program. Thus, completion or near-completion of these very large programs will probably make resources available for other uses.

29. Programs for follow-on offensive and defensive systems are almost certainly under continuing review. Potential military claimants for additional resources include follow-on ICBM and missile submarine systems, antisubmarine warfare systems, advanced aircraft for various purposes, another round of new equipment for theater ground forces, and military space systems. If the Soviets program early and substantial deployment of such systems, many of the resources freed by the completion of other major military programs would be absorbed. But it is also possible for them to adjust military programs so as to channel resources into nonmilitary sectors of the economy.

30. Overshadowing all other potential military claimants for resources, however, would be the deployment of ABM defenses. In this field, the evidence strongly suggests that despite intensive developmental efforts over many years, the Soviets have not yet been successful in developing a system for defense against strategic missiles which they consider satisfactory. The Soviet leaders have apparently thus far authorized only very limited deployment, and we believe that they have not yet decided whether to commit the vast resources needed to provide ABM defenses for a major portion of their population and industry. Considering the long lead times involved in the deployment of so complex a system, it is possible that, if a decision is delayed two or three years, even a large ABM deployment program would not begin to have a major impact on the economy much before the end of the decade. If at that time, Soviet strategic striking forces have reached planned

levels, resources could be diverted to an ABM program. Unless some such diversion of resources can be made within the military establishment, any large-scale ABM deployment program will exert a strong upward pressure on Soviet military expenditures.

31. The Soviet space program must also have come under scrutiny by the Soviet leaders in their search for the high-quality resources required for economic expansion. The space program to date has made extensive use of military facilities and hardware. The program has required scarce resources, however, and ambitious future space activities, involving more specialized facilities and hardware, would considerably increase the drain on resources. Limitations in available resources will almost certainly prevent the Soviets from pursuing all the space programs which would be within their technical capabilities within this decade. We do not expect any major and obvious cutback in Soviet space activities, but the resources pinch may cause the Soviets to limit or stretch out certain expensive, long-term space programs which they once contemplated.

Technical Factors

32. The high and increasing cost of military R and D and the current budgetary squeeze will undoubtedly force some reappraisals by Soviet planners, especially on highly expensive developmental projects. Some programs considered to be of marginal utility may be cut back or suspended. However, evidence available indicates continued large-scale efforts in the major categories of military R and D: ballistic missiles, ABMs, nuclear submarines, ASW, aircraft, nuclear weapons, and CW. Further, we see continued efforts of considerable magnitude on the scientific fronts supporting military requirements, such as computer technology, meteorology, oceanography, geophysics, and electronics. This evidence indicates that reductions in the present level of Soviet expenditures for military R and D are unlikely, although there is some evidence that the rate of growth is declining.

33. The Soviets almost certainly consider that they can ill-afford to fall behind the US in R and D on advanced weapons systems. Further, Soviet statements and writings have suggested that the Soviet leaders see in technological achievements a means for possibly improving their strategic position relative to the US. They will continue to make military research and development a matter of high urgency, and they have a demonstrated capability to concentrate human and material resources on priority objectives. Even with economic factors imposing restraints on military policy, the Soviets will seek urgently to develop new concepts or weapons which give promise of significant military and political advantage. Such weapons or concepts, if successfully developed, would be prime candidates for rapid addition to the Soviet arsenal. We do

not believe, however, that Soviet policy can be based on the expectation of achieving technological advances or breakthroughs of such dimensions that they would reverse the strategic balance within the period of this estimate.

III. FUTURE TRENDS IN MILITARY PROGRAMS

34. The preceding discussion forecasts no drastic increase or decrease in the total Soviet military effort within the present decade. Our evidence on current Soviet military development and deployment programs points to a present Soviet intention to maintain a large military establishment and to continue improving its capabilities. Translated into force structure, this continuation of policy by no means implies a static situation. We believe that the next several years will bring important changes in the Soviet military posture, but that these changes are more likely to be evolutionary than revolutionary in nature.

Strategic Attack Forces

35. In the buildup of strategic strike forces, the Soviets have recently been placing major emphasis upon weapons for intercontinental attack, particularly ICBMs. We believe that by the end of the decade they will have several hundred ICBM launchers, a sizable force of missile submarines, and a significant though reduced force of bombers. In the ICBM force, qualitative improvement will be emphasized; we believe that the Soviets will introduce follow-on systems characterized by better accuracy, larger payloads, better reliability, and easier handling and maintenance. We believe that they will also attempt to improve survivability by deploying a greater proportion of their ICBMs in hard sites, by providing their submarines with submerged launch ballistic missiles of longer range than their present surface launched missiles, and by increasing the readiness of their strategic forces. If our estimates are correct, the Soviets will not be able to pursue a strategy of destroying US nuclear striking forces prior to launch, but they will have a force capable of attacking major US cities and soft military targets, as well as a capability for retaliation even after an initial US attack.

36. We believe that Soviet strategic attack forces intended for Eurasian operations are nearing planned levels. The large missile forces deployed primarily against Europe will probably remain at about their present size, but survivability will be enhanced through hardening and possibly by the introduction of ground mobile systems. The medium bomber force will probably decline in size over the next several years, but capabilities will probably improve with the continued introduction of supersonic aircraft. Thus the Soviets will maintain massive forces for strategic attack in Eurasia and will improve the quality of these forces.

Strategic Defense

37. Although the Soviets are aware of planned reductions in US bomber forces, this threat will remain a matter of great concern for the period of this estimate. The massive defenses deployed over the past several years provide a measure of the Soviets' concern with this problem, and our evidence indicates that the Soviets are continuing to strengthen these defenses. The total number of interceptor aircraft will probably decline, but a larger percentage of the remaining force will be all-weather types. Deployment of the SA–3 for low-altitude defense will continue, probably on a scale sufficient to supplement the existing medium and high altitude defenses around the more important targets and astride what the Soviets consider to be the more likely peripheral penetration routes. It is possible that more attention will be given to sheltering the civil population from fallout, but in view of construction needs in the economy, we doubt that a large-scale shelter program will be undertaken.

38. The Soviets might hope through development and deployment of an antimissile system to offset US strategic superiority to some extent. The available evidence leads us to conclude that the Soviets have not yet been successful in developing effective and reliable systems for defense against strategic missiles. We believe that the Soviets would not regard as acceptable for wide-scale deployment any ABM system that does not have continuous readiness and an almost instantaneous reaction time together with a very high level of accuracy, reliability, and discrimination. Considering the effort devoted to ABM development, it is possible, though by no means certain, that the Soviets will achieve such a system within the period of this estimate. When and if a satisfactory system is developed, the Soviet leaders will have to consider the great cost of large-scale deployment. They would almost certainly wish to defend key urban-industrial areas and they may seek to defend some portion of their ICBM force in order to strengthen their deterrent. Beyond these generalizations, we cannot estimate the extent to which they would commit resources to ABM defenses.

Theater Forces

39. Deprecation of general purpose forces and prime reliance on nuclear and missile weapons have been recurring themes in Khrushchev's statements on military policy. Manpower reductions are likely to be made primarily at the expense of theater forces. There are no indications that such reductions will be any more palatable to the marshals today than four years ago. While we believe that Khrushchev is likely to prevail and that some reductions will be made, the Soviets will probably continue to maintain sizable theater forces through the remainder of the decade.

40. The modernization of Soviet ground forces will continue. The extent of improvement, however, will be closely related to trends in total size; the larger the forces which the USSR elects to retain, the more it will have to contend with obsolescence and shortages. The Soviets may, therefore, choose to maintain a smaller number of ground divisions which could be kept at a higher state of readiness. If the Soviets decide that they must seriously respond to the contingency of non-nuclear warfare, they will probably provide increased combat support as well as increased service support. Present trends in the ground weapons development program point to a continuing emphasis on firepower and mobility. The Soviets could probably have the numbers of tactical nuclear weapons which they would consider requisite for theater forces within two or three years, unless priority is given to air and missile defense warheads. Soviet procedures for the control and use of such weapons are likely to improve significantly. More and better general purpose vehicles and increased reliance on pipelines will reduce somewhat the Soviet dependence on rail lines for logistic support.

41. In recent years, the USSR has increased its concern with areas remote from its borders, and the Cuban venture shows that it can deploy small ground and air contingents to distant areas and maintain them once deployed. However, there is no evidence that the USSR has established any special military component trained and equipped specifically for independent small-scale operations, and it is severely limited in airlift, sealift, and naval support suitable for distant, limited military operations. It is possible that over the next few years the Soviets will seek to improve their capabilities for distant, limited military operations through the designation and training of appropriate forces, and the development of equipment specifically for their use and logistic support.

Naval Forces

42. We believe that the numerical strength of Soviet naval forces will remain fairly stable over the next several years. Capabilities for conducting operations at long distance from Soviet shores will continue to rest largely upon the submarine force. The effectiveness of this force will improve as the numbers of nuclear-powered units increase. Surface forces will continue to be strengthened by the addition of offensive and defensive missile armament and by the introduction of new classes of antisubmarine warfare (ASW) and mine warfare ships. The survivability of the fleet will probably be enhanced by the further deployment of tenders for mobile support.

43. Much of the impetus for change in the Soviet Navy has come from the USSR's concern over the threat posed by US carrier task forces and missile submarines. The USSR will continue to improve its ASW and anticarrier capabilities, primarily through the application of improved submarines and long-range aircraft to these missions. The effectiveness

of surface units at distances beyond the range of land-based fighter cover will probably be strengthened through the addition of SAM armament. Despite these improvements, however, we believe that the capabilities of the Soviet Navy to conduct surface operations in open ocean areas will remain severely limited. Moreover, in the period of this estimate, it probably will achieve only a limited capability to detect, identify, localize, and maintain surveillance on submarines operating in open seas.

Nuclear Weapons

44. In the extensive 1961–1962 nuclear test series, the Soviets probably satisfied their most pressing weapons test requirements. Research and development in this field over the next few years will probably continue to focus upon the exploitation of these test results, and their translation into weapons. The Soviet weapons stockpile still consists largely of weapons developed from tests conducted before the moratorium of 1958. We estimate that, in general, a minimum of about two years is required after testing before a new nuclear weapon begins to enter stockpile. Thus, some weapons developed in the 1961–1962 test series are probably now entering inventory, with priority probably given to strategic weapons, particularly ICBM warheads. Probable trends in stockpiled weapons include higher yields for strategic weapons and a broader spectrum of weapons for tactical use. As the stockpile of fissionable materials grows, restrictions on the availability of weapons for tactical use and for strategic defense will ease.

45. Assuming that the Soviets observe the limited test ban treaty, they will be restricted in the development of nuclear weapons to underground tests and laboratory research. Research and development could include improvements in efficiency and yield-to-weight ratios, studies of special effects, work on pure fusion devices, improvement of ABM warheads and other existing weapons, and research on the hardening of warheads and other missile components.

Chemical Warfare

46. We believe that the USSR now possesses a substantial chemical warfare capability based on extensive stocks of CW agents, a variety of chemical munitions, including warheads for tactical rockets and missiles, and a wide range of defensive equipment. The Soviet CW research and development program continues to be active on a scale generally comparable with that in the US. Current efforts are focused on developing new toxic agents and munitions for their delivery. The lack of a satisfactory method for timely nerve agent detection remains a major weakness. Many studies potentially applicable to discovery and development of nonlethal incapacitating agents are in process, and a new agent of this type could appear at any time.

Space Weapons

47. On the basis of evidence presently available, we are unable to determine the existence of Soviet plans or programs for the military use of space, apart from the Cosmos photographic satellites, which probably perform military support functions. However, we believe that the USSR almost certainly is investigating the feasibility of space systems for offensive and defensive weapon systems. Soviet decisions to develop military space systems will depend on their expected cost and effectiveness as compared with alternative systems, possible political advantages or disadvantages, and the Soviet estimate of US intentions and capabilities in comparable fields.

48. For accomplishing military missions, we think that within this decade, orbital weapons will not compare favorably with ICBMs in terms of reaction time, targeting flexibility, vulnerability, average life, and positive control. In view of these considerations, the much greater cost of orbital weapon systems, and Soviet endorsement of the UN resolution against nuclear weapons in space, we believe that the Soviets are unlikely to develop and deploy an orbital weapon system of military significance within the period of this estimate. If they should nevertheless do so developmental testing should be observable at least a year or two prior to attainment of an accurate, reliable system.

49. In the defensive weapons field, we believe that the Soviets intend to develop a capability to counter US military satellites. By modification of existing equipment, including air defense early warning radars and ballistic missiles, the Soviets probably could develop a limited antisatellite capability within a few months after a decision had been made to do so. We are aware of no evidence indicating that the Soviets have made such a decision. We believe that to achieve success with such a technique they would need to use a nuclear warhead in violation of the test ban treaty. The Soviets could also be working toward a system designed specifically for satellite interception, but we think it almost certain that no such system is operational at present. The use of coorbiting satellites or other advanced techniques during the period of this estimate seems much less likely.

IV. CHANCES OF MORE DRASTIC CHANGE

50. We have considered the possibility that in the light of the world political and strategic situation the Soviets might conclude that their national security could be adequately guarded with forces considerably smaller than those they had hitherto planned. Over the past several years, they have found that, essential as it is for their position in the world to maintain powerful strategic forces, the possession of these forces does not always translate into tangible political gains. Moreover, they might believe that by devoting the resources saved to solving

their urgent economic problems, they could advance their general aims more effectively. The Soviets might also hope through a relaxation of tensions to check the US buildup, or by means of advantageous disarmament agreements even to reduce US superiority. A major reduction in the total military effort could be pursued either unilaterally or through international arms control agreement.

51. We consider any substantial unilateral cuts very unlikely, primarily because of the interests and attitudes that operate in Soviet decision making—the Communist world outlook and its view of the role of military power, the immense vested interests represented by the armed forces, the inertia of policy on such matters in any great power, and the long-established fear of capitalist aggressive intentions. Progress toward international arms limitation agreements will probably be slow. Nevertheless, we think that the Soviets probably will continue to seek ways to curtail the arms race in a moderate degree by "mutual example" (i.e., unilateral, uninspected moves by both sides), hoping thereby to reduce the military burden on the economy.

52. We have also considered the possibility of a major increase in the scale of the Soviet military effort. This seems very unlikely for a number of reasons in addition to economic constraints. The Soviets are not likely to believe that such an increase would add measurably to their security or give them important political opportunities they do not now have. Further, they would expect the US to match, or perhaps overmatch, any higher level of effort on their part. It is conceivable that the Soviets would take a different view if research and development should result in a technological advance or breakthrough which offered the prospect of significant improvement in strategic attack or defense. The Soviets would certainly seek to exploit such an advance to gain political and military advantage, and they would undoubtedly consider increasing their military expenditures if effective exploitation seemed to require it. But their decisions as to deployment would be tempered by economic considerations and by the realization that, considering the advanced state of US technology, any lead which was gained would almost certainly be temporary.

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